

OFFICE OF PROGRAM EVALUATION
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUCCESS ACADEMY 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Success Academy provided tutoring to 3,476 students who attended at least one of 14 days of instruction between 12/20/08 and 3/7/09. Each day included 4 hours of instruction in language arts, mathematics, and science, as appropriate to students' needs. By student characteristic, English Language Learners had the highest percent attendance of all subgroups (46%). Attendance rates were comparable across all the FCAT levels represented at the schools.

Attendance was greater than expected; highest among the students in grades 3 to 6 (69%), second highest among 9th and 10th graders (32%), and lowest among 11th and 12th graders (19%). Of participants, 53% of the students attended from 10 to 14 days, and 77% of students attended at least 6 days. Most participants (71%) attended the first day of the Academy and most students (73%) who attended the first day, completed at least 10 sessions. By day, the two Saturdays after teacher planning days had the lowest attendance.

The effect of participation on reading and mathematics achievement was gauged for samples of 9th and 10th graders. These groups participated for an average of 11 days. Elementary school students were not included in analyses because with high participation rates, there were not sufficient non-participants at the students' schools to allow comparison. For reading, analyses included examination of the effect of exemplary teachers. Principals, assistant principals, and regional/district staff nominated teachers who they considered exemplary. To be included in analyses, teachers had to be nominated by at least two sources or by one source and observed by the evaluator to demonstrate best practices. Lack of time precluded identification of exemplary mathematics teachers. Results of analyses on achievement gains of 9th and 10th graders were as follows.

- **Mathematics:** On average, participation in the Academy had a significant positive effect on students' mathematics FCAT developmental scores. The average Academy participant who attended for at least 5 days, gained 10 points more than non-participants.
- **Reading:** Over all Academy students, there was no significant effect of participation for students who attended for at least 5 days. Neither was there an effect of participation for students who attended for at least 10 days.
- **Reading (Exemplary Teachers):** For students of exemplary Success Academy teachers, participation in the Academy had a significant effect on their FCAT developmental scores.
 - As compared to non-participants, the average student of exemplary Academy teachers gained 26 points more.
 - As compared to participants assigned to other Academy teachers, the average student of exemplary teachers gained 33 points more.

Conclusions. With an average of 11 days of attendance, which represents 6% of the school year, the students who had mathematics instruction and the students of 17 exemplary reading teachers outperformed matched comparison students. For students of exemplary reading teachers, the gains were roughly one third of what Level 1 or 2 students who stay at the same level need to make in order to be considered as having "made gains." Similarly, the average mathematics gains of students of all mathematics teachers were roughly one-fifth of the minimum necessary for a student to be classified as having "made gains." In one respect, these gains were modest because they were a portion of the accountability guideline minimum. In another respect, the gains were substantial because they were obtained with only 11 days of instruction.

SUCCESS ACADEMY 2009

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation described in this document was conducted by the Office of Program Evaluation on behalf of Title I Administration, the primary funding source for the implementation of the Success Academy, which was carried out at 9 schools¹. This report describes the procedures followed for the evaluation, findings on the implementation of the Academy, and suggestions for future academies, should any be undertaken.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The evaluation was conducted to provide formative and summative feedback. Formative feedback was given on an ongoing basis to decision makers through the reporting line, and to assist potential future implementations, through this report. Summative feedback, i.e., an evaluation of learning gains as measured by the FCAT is also included.

- Formative feedback informs decision makers on implementation so that, if necessary, they can make modifications.
- Summative feedback informs decision makers on program outcomes.

Data were collected by one evaluator in 12 of the 14 sessions held. In order to visit schools at all phases of implementation², two or three schools were visited per day for most attended sessions. Each senior high school was visited at least once on three or on four days.

Data collection included interviews, observations, focus groups with students and/or administrators, as well as downloads and record review of student attendance and of teacher payroll records. The evaluator observed teacher briefings before the start of sessions, classroom instructions, and teacher debriefing sessions after student dismissal. Most of the observations, all of the focus groups, and all interviews of students were at the senior high schools.

At the school level, the following aspects of the program were examined: 1) student enrollment, 2) grouping, 3) determination of curriculum, 4) degree of curriculum differentiation, 5) planning and information provided to teachers about their students' needs, 6) attendance procedures, and

¹ Holmes and Liberty City elementary schools, Homestead, Miami Carol, Miami Central, Miami Edison, Miami Norland, North Miami, and Corporate Academy South senior high schools.

² In accordance with best practices in evaluation, permission to visit classrooms was requested and obtained from all principals and teachers. As she entered each classroom, the evaluator asked the teacher if she may come in. At each visit the evaluator sat in the back of the classroom for a few minutes before exiting quietly. The evaluator thanks all administrative and teaching staff for the warm welcome she received, which allowed her to do her job.

7) supervision of operations and of curriculum fidelity. At the classroom level, the following five domains were reviewed: 1) time management, 2) climate, 3) curriculum appropriateness, 4) instruction, and 5) physical environment. On the basis of observations, over the course of the program, evaluation efforts focused on the aspects and domains that emerged as important issues.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Success Academy was defined by a set of guiding principles that included a maximum student teacher ratio of 10 to 1, specific days and hours of implementation, a schedule for student payments, a financial literacy component, and the stipulation that a parent involvement component be included. Students were offered transportation. Breakfast was served at 8:30 and instruction was provided from 9:00 to 1:00 with a short mid-session break and snack prior to a change of class.

In response to observed needs, starting on the 10th of January, changes and additions to the program structure were made by district administrators. These included a standardized curriculum, briefing and debriefing on the day's lessons by a curriculum specialist, classroom support from regional and district staff, and additional regional and district supervision. The curriculum was developed at the district level for each subject area. A couple of weeks after the district undertook the responsibility for curriculum development, it also disseminated copies of the curriculum; i.e., student handouts, instructions for teachers, and overheads. Subsequently, the district also distributed laboratory materials for the science classes and pencils, calculators, and timers.

In the evaluator's assessment, which is consistent with subsequent feedback from school site administrators, the added supports, in particular, teacher briefing and debriefing, were beneficial for instruction. There was good optimization of resources, meaning that all possible resources were allocated and that given these resources, all aspects of the program worked as well as anyone could reasonably expect.

PARTICIPATION

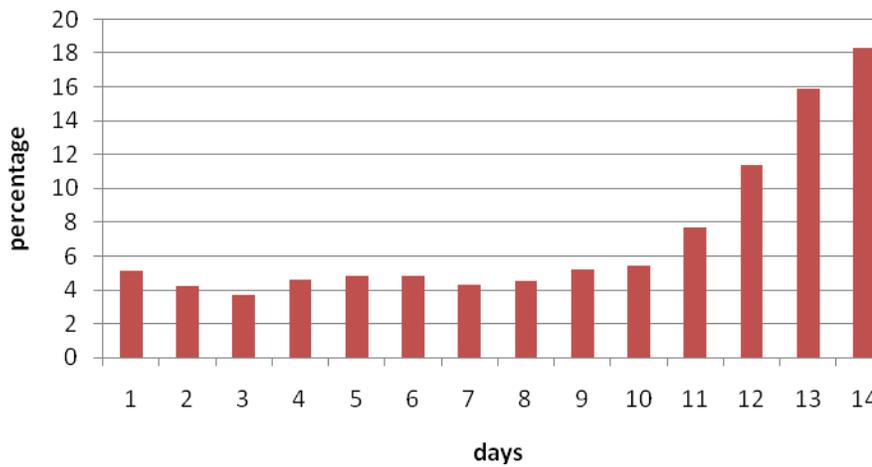
Participation was open to all students and the deadline for registration was extended to allow entry to the maximum number of students possible. Payment was an evident motivator for students. Schools had an unprecedented and unexpectedly high turnout. A high turnout had been expected, possibly twice as high as typical in prior Saturday tutoring, but at most schools, the actual turnout was closer to four times that of other Saturday tutoring. This turnout, coupled with the fact that sessions started during the holidays, resulted in most high schools not having enough teachers, or enough clerical, custodial, and security personnel at hand. The overflow of students, up to 400 at one school, was temporarily assigned to auditoriums where students were given worksheets to

complete³. As sessions progressed, this situation improved because additional teachers were recruited and attendance diminished such that for most sessions, students received tutoring in settings with ratios that approximated 10 to 1. By the end of the Academy, some groups had as few as 5 or 6 students.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Total Attendance. At the 9 schools that implemented the Success Academy, a total of 3,476 students attended; 5% for 1 day, 17% for 2 to 5 days, 24% for 6 to 10 days, and 53% for 10 to 14 days. Eighteen percent of students (18%) attended all 14 days. This attendance rate was many times over the attendance rates obtained in prior Saturday tutoring. See *Frequency Distribution of Total Attendance by School* under Tables, for school level statistics.

Percentage Distribution of Student Attendance



Attended for at Least 1 Day

- 69% of schools' 3 to 6 grade students
- 32% of schools' 9th and 10th grade students
- 19% of schools' 11th and 12th grade students

Overall, 53% of students attended 10 or more days

Attendance at the Success Academy represented 27% of enrollment at the 9 participating schools. Students in grades three to six attended at a much higher rate (69%) than students in grades 9 and 10 (32%) and that students in grades 11th and 12th (19%). By race/ethnicity, 29%, 21%, and 18% of Black, Hispanic,

Highest Attendance Rates

- 69% of students in grades 3 to 6
- 46% of English Language Learners

³ In focus groups, some students who discontinued attending said that they had not returned because of the lack of teachers and lack of the work.

and White students attended. By gender, the attendance of females (28%) was minimally higher than the attendance of males (26%) and at 30%, the attendance of students who participated in the FRL program, was higher than that of non-participants (22%). With 46% attendance, English Language Learners had the highest relative attendance.

- 29% of Black students
- 30% of FRL participants

Students from all achievement levels attended the Academy. By prior FCAT reading, attendance was comparable for students at Levels 1, 2, and 3 (33%, 34%, and 34%), slightly higher for students at Level 4 (37%), and lowest for students at Level 5 (23%). For mathematics, attendance for students who had scored at Levels 1 and 5 (31% and 32%) were slightly lower than for students who had scored at Levels 2, 3, and 4 (35%, 36%, and 35%). See *Percentage Participation by School and by Student Characteristic* under Tables for school level statistics.

- Attendance included students from all achievement levels
- For almost all FCAT levels percent of students at each level who attended was roughly comparable.

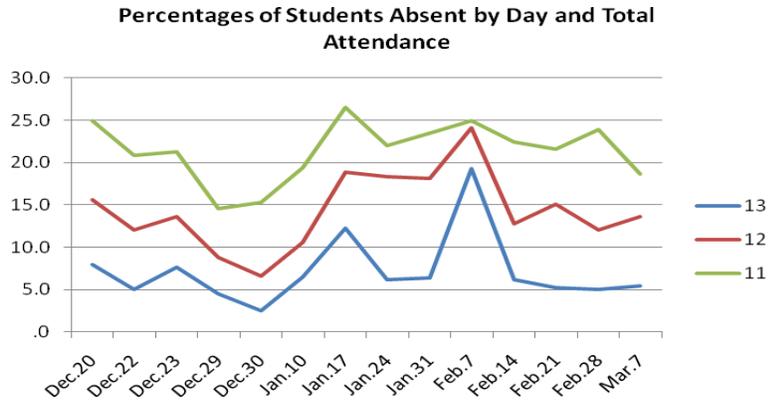
Attendance by Day and First Day of Attendance.

As can be seen from the table at right, attendance ranged from 58%, to 64% of students. Most students who attended, 71% (*n* = 2465), started on the first day of the Academy and 73% of these students (*n* = 1,811) attended a total of 10 or more days. Ten days represented 71% of all possible classes. Adjusting for the number of classes possible to attend, this proportion of classes attended was higher than the proportion of classes attended by students whose first day was the first Saturday after the winter break. Among this second group, only 63% of the students attended 71% or more of classes from that day to the March 7th. Hence, the attendance of students who started on the first day was relatively more consistent. See *Percentage Attendance by School and Date* in the Tables section for school level statistics.

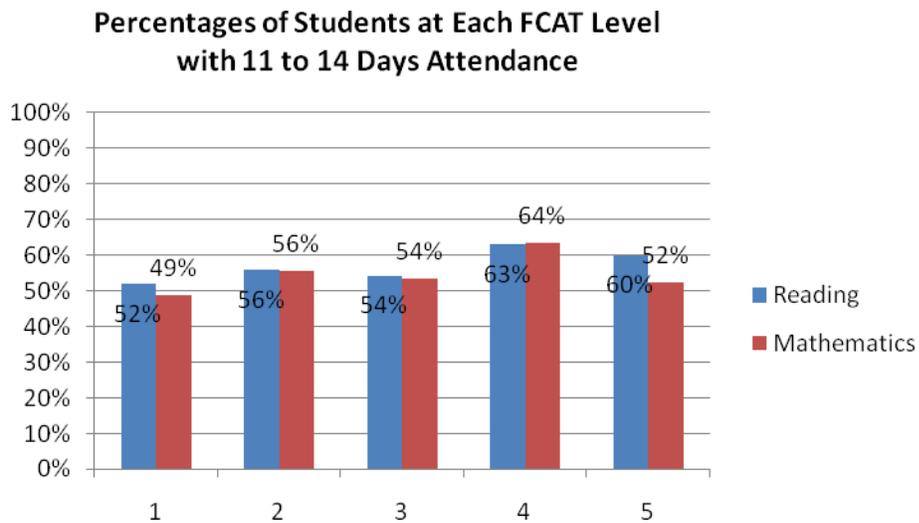
Date	% Daily Attendance	% 1st Day
12/20/2008	64.2	70.9
12/22/2008	63.8	9.3
12/23/2008	61.2	2.2
12/29/2008	63.2	3.5
12/30/2008	62.8	0.8
1/10/2009	64.6	5.9
1/17/2009	58.1	2.2
1/24/2009	62.2	2.5
1/31/2009	62.3	1.4
2/7/2009	57.1	0.5
2/14/2009	58.8	0.2
2/21/2009	60.2	0.2
2/28/2009	59.3	0.2
3/7/2009	60.2	0.3

High Attendance Students. Of students who missed only 1 to 3 days of the Academy, their most frequent days absent were the 17th of January and the 7th of February. Both of these were Saturdays immediately after a teacher planning day. Indeed, as can be seen from the table above, those two days had the lowest percent attendance of all. It is possible that students did not know that classes would be held those Saturdays. However, the trend line of students who attended 13 days suggests otherwise. From that group, all students who were present on the Saturday after the first teacher

planning day and absent on the second Saturday after a teacher planning day knew that classes would be offered because they had attended the prior Saturday after a teacher planning day.



Attendance and Prior Achievement. Of the students who attended the Academy, from one half to almost two thirds of the students at each FCAT level attended a total of 11 days or more. In reading, the percentage that had high attendance was 52%, 56%, 54%, 63% and 60%, respectively for levels 1 to 5, respectively. In mathematics, the percentage attendance was 49%, 56%, 54%, 64%, and 52%, respectively for levels 1 to 5. Hence, although students who had scored at levels 4 and 5 had higher percentages of high attendance than students who had scored at lower levels, the differences were modest.



STAFFING

As stated above, because of unexpectedly high turnout, several schools were understaffed the first few days of the Academy. School, regional, and district personnel mobilized to recruit teachers. Substitutes and teachers who failed to demonstrate best practices were replaced as teachers with proven records became available.

Overall, 493 teachers taught in the Academy. Across all schools, 54% of the teachers taught at least 7 of the 14 sessions and 40% taught at least 8 of the 9 sessions after the Holiday vacation. The table,

“*Descriptive Statistics on the Teachers in the Academy*” presented at the end of this report includes minimum, maximum, and average numbers of teachers by day by school, as well as the total number of teachers by school⁴. These figures do not include regional, district, or state funded staff that taught, provided professional development, and/or supervised.

STUDENT GROUPING AND CURRICULUM

With slight variations, students were grouped according to prior FCAT performance and to subsequent testing requirements such that students in the lowest 25% in achievement, students close to the proficiency threshold, and higher achieving students were grouped together respectively. For instance, eleventh and twelfth grade students who had scored in the proficient range in only one subject devoted all their time to that subject on which they would retest. Students who needed to retest on two subject areas split their time between these. Instruction in science was provided to 11th graders who had scored in the proficient range in reading and in mathematics.

The curriculum focused on FCAT preparation. It consisted primarily of FCAT released items accompanied by instructional activities that supported the FCAT benchmarks.

A Substantial Challenge

Example 1

The class has read a passage on changing a flat tire. The teacher writes on the board the writing prompt that follows the passage and takes the students' dictated answer. Note from the students' answer included below that the students apply a lesson that they have been taught, to answer questions with information from the narrative. But, students fail to read "why" and instead answer "how." The teacher appropriately pointed out that their answer would score a 0 and explained why.

Prompt: "The author attempts to persuade the reader why learning to change a flat tire is important by..."

Student response: ...illustrating and showing pictures of the hand crank, the tire iron, the spare tire, and the jack. The tools that are needed to change a tire. He also shows the steps of how to change a flat tire."

⁴ Statistics were generated from payroll sign-in logs

TEACHER PREPARATION

Teachers met by subject area to review lessons half an hour before the start of sessions and met to debrief half an hour after students were dismissed. Sessions were led by a subject area specialist. The evaluator noted excellent examples of preparation, with teachers turning to each other and to resources in order to clarify points in the days' lessons. However, late arrivals were observed by the evaluator and were reported in interviews with principals. Length of observed sessions and the extensiveness of review also varied across teachers, across days, and across session facilitators.

Approximately mid-program, in response to requests, teachers were given materials at the end of the day so that they could prepare for the subsequent Saturday. Poor implementations of the lesson plans were still observed, but these appeared to be less severe and/or less frequent than before the beginning of briefings. A drawback to materials being provided ahead of time was that some teachers used them during the weekday and on Saturdays students were presented with lessons they had already seen.

SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Supervision was provided by schools' administrative staff. The evaluator observed administrative staff conduct "walk-throughs," possibly at a minimum of twice per day. At one school, supervision was particularly pronounced. At each visit the evaluator noted that the administrative staff was visiting classrooms during instructional time.

Starting in January, region and district curriculum support specialists and mid-level administrators were assigned to schools to assist with the supervision of curriculum fidelity and to substitute if necessary for absent teachers. Also at this time, high ranking regional and administrative staff visited in force. Schools had from five to seven upper level administrators per day, among which was the superintendent. Without a doubt, the presence of these visitors communicated strongly and clearly the importance attached to the Academy. In addition, some upper level administrators also provided functional support by replacing absent teachers in the classrooms.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Students opened accounts at the Credit Union into which funds were deposited for attendance, \$10 and \$30 per day respectively for elementary and senior high school students. To register students for their accounts, staff members from the Credit Union were in attendance at each of the schools most days during the first half of the Academy. The process was handicapped by students not completing forms, or not completing them appropriately, by lack of identification, and by lack of parent signatures for students ages 15 or under. As of the end of the sessions, not all students who attended had opened accounts. Financial literacy classes, originally to be delivered by staff from the Credit Union during the Academy were postponed until after the FCAT administration.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent sessions were held at each school. Evaluation of these efforts was beyond the scope of this study, but the few times that the evaluator had an opportunity to look in on sessions, parents were highly engaged. An end-of-program event gathered parent participants from all the schools. It was well attended, and the two presentations observed by the evaluator were very well received.

CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM

Climate. A couple of school administrators reported incidents of students being asked to leave because of inappropriate behavior. Also, the evaluator heard an announcement at one school stating that unruly behavior such as had occurred the prior week would not be tolerated. Notwithstanding, all observed classrooms interactions between students and between students and teachers were appropriately respectful.

By and large, student engagement was good and appeared to improve over time. On more than one occasion the evaluator heard students being told that they were being paid for being active participants, that they must behave as though they were on a job, and that they would be dismissed if they were inappropriate. This policy, the level of supervision that was exercised, and the withdrawal of less interested students appears to have contributed to a very good working environment.

Time Management. Appropriate time management improved over the weeks. In the first classroom that the evaluator observed, the teacher took more than 15 minutes to start instruction. On one of the first few sessions at another school, students left classrooms a good 10 minutes before dismissal and returned to classrooms because the security personnel insisted they do so. In early to mid January there was an evident and very favorable change that lasted to the end of the program in teachers' use of instructional time.

Instruction. At each school, administrative staff and/or curriculum specialists guided the evaluator to teachers who they knew to be exemplars of best practices (See “*Exemplary Practices*” below).

A Substantial Challenge

Example 2

In another class, students have read a narrative on the lute. The question at the end of the reading passage reads, “How would you identify the origins of an antique lute? Use details and information from the article to support your answer.” With student input, the teacher and students formulate a response which the teacher writes on the board. It is copied below exactly as it appeared on the board. Note, among other things, that students describe the lute but do not address the question.

“Based on the information in the passage, the origins of the antique lute can be identify by roughly pear-shaped musical instrument having four to six sets of strings. Also, the main parts of the instrument includes the belly. The arms on which the tunning pegs are located. Lastly major variations use either skin or weeds as the belly.”

Observations of these and other teachers revealed that the quality of instruction improved considerably over time as the curriculum was scripted and reviewed with teachers and as principals

replaced teachers who did not meet their standards. One of the remaining distinctions between teachers selected by principals as exemplars of best practices and other teachers was that whereas other teachers lectured about FCAT strategies, those selected by principals guided students so that students used FCAT strategies.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

Sample 1

The bell rings. There are only 4 students in the class. Teacher starts working right away¹. Someone comes to the door to ask Teacher if everything is OK and if there is anything that she needs². Teacher responds that she is OK and asks the person at the door if she knows why there are only 4 students in class today. The visitor responds that perhaps the students were delayed signing up for the Credit Union account. Two more students walk in and within a few more minutes others come in so that 14 minutes after the bell has rung there is a total of 9 students³.

Class is doing a unit on “words and phrases in context.” Teacher asks students the meaning of words and phrases in context, waits a few seconds,⁴ asks again when there is no response⁵, and replies “Good” when a student provides the correct answer⁶. She expands on the student’s answer and to emphasize that the students should rely on the test narrative,⁷ she draws a box⁸ around ‘text’ on the word ‘context’ which she had previously written on the board.

She tells the class that they are going to work on prefixes and asks them if they know what prefixes are. Waits⁴. There is no response. She tells them to look at page “x” and asks a student to read. She waits a few seconds and asks, “So, what does that mean?”⁵ The teacher continues to process the concept of prefix with the students by giving them the word “tie” and asking them to add a prefix⁹. When a student adds “un” she says, “So, now what do you know about prefixes from this example?” A student says, “Changes meaning.” She re-iterates⁷ and tells the student that he was right⁶.

Students chatter. Teacher immediately stops, lowers her already quiet voice¹⁰ and tells them that these sessions are very important, that they must work hard⁵. The students immediately stop chattering and everyone goes back to work. The re-direction took very few seconds¹¹.

The class starts going down a list of prefixes. Teacher process each one with the class by asking questions¹², saying “good” or “right” every time an answer is correct and by providing corrections¹³ as necessary. They work thoroughly and quickly. It is only 13 minutes since the bell rang and the class has already reviewed six prefixes¹¹.

- ¹ Starts right away
- ² Is offered help
- ³ Good ratio
- ⁴ Good response time
- ⁵ Insists on participation
- ⁶ Reinforces correct answers
- ⁷ Extends student’s response
- ⁸ Adds visual modality
- ⁹ Breaks down the task
- ¹⁰ Re-directs behavior in a respectful and efficient manner
- ¹¹ Uses time efficiently
- ¹² Engages with questions
- ¹³ Provides corrective feedback

Sample 2

It is 15 minutes since the bell rang. There are 11 students. This class is also working on prefixes. The students are completing an exercise. Teacher stops them, "...even though some of you may not have finished. We'll do it together." She says that she knew everyone had the first one correct because she had seen it as she had walked around¹. They talk about each item, and for each item, Teacher processes it with the class by asking questions². She never misses a chance to say "That's right" or "Excellent."³ She asks students to volunteer and also calls on individual students⁴. One student snickers at another student's answer. Without change in tone or pace, Teacher tells the student who is being teased that she can understand what he is trying to say⁵. She gives the right answer⁶ and then minimizes the teasing⁷ keeping everyone on task by saying something like, "So-and-so is playing with you again, no⁸? But, I understand your thinking."⁵ The class moves along so quickly that I cannot take verbatim notes⁹. Everyone's focus is on the work at hand. Even teasing fails to distract students¹⁰.

Teacher asks a student to read⁴ and the student reads so softly that she can barely be heard. In the same soft supportive tone¹¹ she has used all the time I have been there Teacher says, "You can speak up. You are right."^{3,5} Student speaks up.

A discussion starts about the advantages and disadvantages of seat belts. It goes on for about a minute. Teacher brings everyone to the task at hand¹⁰ with, "You are both bringing in valid points but you need to stick to what is on the text because your questions are going to be based on the text"¹². We could have a discussion about this, but we need to move on⁹."

- ¹ Checks for understanding
- ² Engages with questions, no lectures
- ³ Reinforces correct responses
- ⁴ Expects participation
- ⁵ Reinforces participation
- ⁶ Provides corrective feedback
- ⁷ Ignores inappropriate behavior and minimizes possible conflict
- ⁸ Focuses on the student who is working
- ⁹ Uses time efficiently
- ¹⁰ Keeps students on task
- ¹¹ Interacts respectfully
- ¹² Test taking strategy

Sample 3

This mathematics class is well underway when I walk in. There are 10 students and they all seem to be speaking at once as they argue about an answer. Everyone is engaged. It's loud. It's really loud. If I didn't understand their words I would have thought they were passionately arguing about a football game, not about a math item¹.

One student is standing up talking with Teacher. Another is standing next to a student who is sitting. Teacher challenges first one student and then another² to explain why they chose 9 or 10 as an answer. The discussion must have gone on for 3 to 5 minutes with some students standing up to compare their work to that of another student with a different answer³. Teacher stops it by providing the right answer⁴. One student is undaunted, passionately stating, "My answer is 9 and I am going home with that."¹

Teacher introduces a new topic by asking them to read his t-shirt⁵ and all students re-orient right away. The topic is binary systems. One student asks what is binary. Teacher doesn't answer directly⁶. Instead he processes an example of base ten with them on the board. The student who had asked the meaning of binary shouts out, "You told us THAT two weeks ago"⁶ before Teacher ties it in to an explanation of binary systems. He breaks the concept down into small steps⁷ and asks questions that lead students to process⁸. Students shout out answers, but it's not screaming. Teacher has a strong voice, but it's not shouting. Every student is still passionately engaged. As I observe, I am impressed by the Teacher's skills at breaking down information and asking questions that lead students to understanding. But, the discussion moves too quickly for me to write down quotes or descriptions of explanations and interactions⁹.

¹ Students engaged intellectually and emotionally

² Expects participation

³ Peer collaboration

⁴ Provides corrective feedback

⁵ Prepared, enriches

⁶ Stays on task

⁷ Breaks down task

⁸ Engages with questions, no lectures

⁹ Keeps a fast pace without leaving anyone behind.

Exemplary teachers were characterized by good command of the content area, use of all of the instructional time for instruction/practice, and by following the curriculum guide. Their highly efficient use of time meant that every minute of the period was used for instruction/practice. Students were so busy with instructional work that they had little to no opportunity for disruptive/non-productive behavior, and if such occurred, teachers gently, immediately, and in a matter of seconds re-directed them to work. Teachers gave students corrective feedback so that right answers, and the reasons they were correct, were made clear to students.

ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES

Did the Success Academy boost participants' achievement? To answer this question, regression analyses were used to compare the FCAT scores of students who attended the Success Academy for at least 5 days to those of matched students who did not attend. Analyses were conducted on 9th and 10th graders only. Because high percentages of elementary students participated in the Academy, there were not enough elementary aged non-participants for valid comparisons. For details see the tables on page 33 and the endnote for “*Statistical Analyses and Results.*”

Results. The findings below summarize the results of regression analyses on 9th and 10th graders.

- **Mathematics:** On average, participation in the Academy had a significant positive effect on students' mathematics FCAT developmental scores. The average Academy participant gained 10 points more than non-participants.
- **Reading:** Over all Academy students, there was no significant effect of participation for students who attended for at least 5 days. Neither was there a significant effect of participation for students who attended for at least 10 days.
- **Reading (Exemplary Teachers⁵):** For students of exemplary Success Academy reading teachers, participation in the Academy had a significant effect on their FCAT developmental scores.
 - As compared to non-participants, the average student of exemplary Academy teachers gained 26 points more.
 - As compared to participants assigned to other Academy teachers, the average student of exemplary teachers gained 33 points more.

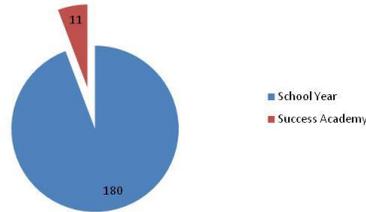
Conclusions. With an average of 11 days of attendance, the students who had mathematics instruction and the students of 17 exemplary reading teachers outperformed matched comparison students. These findings suggest that gains may be obtained with 5 to 14 days, average 11 days, of attendance.

What did obtained gains mean in practical terms? According to the accountability guidelines for reading, students who remain at Levels 1 or 2 were considered to have “made gains” if their DSS scores increased at least 77 points. Thus, the 26 points that the Success Academy was estimated to have contributed to the students of exemplary teachers represented one third of this minimum. For mathematics, students who remain at Levels 1 or 2 were considered to have “made gains” if

⁵ Principals, assistant principals, and regional or district staff nominated teachers who they considered exemplary. To be included in analyses, teachers had to be nominated by at least two sources or by one source and observed by the evaluator to demonstrate best practices.

their DSS scores increased by 54 points from 8th to 9th grade or by 48 points from 9th to 10th grade.

Thus, the estimated 10 point contribution of participation in the Success Academy was approximately one fifth of the minimum. In absolute terms, the gains were moderate, but they were obtained with an average attendance of only 11 days; which represents 6% of a school year.



ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATIONS IN FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

RESULTS OF FOCUS GROUPS WITH STUDENTS

Focus groups were conducted at North Miami Senior High School on 2/13/09 with 5 intensive classrooms of students: 2 mathematics and 3 reading classes. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather data on students' reasons for attending or not attending the Success Academy as well as to identify incentives and appropriate schedules for their administration.

Procedures. In each classroom the facilitator started the session by asking students what very special surprise worth approximately \$400 they would like to find one day when they woke up. Some of the gifts suggested cost considerably more than \$400, hence the facilitator asked students if they preferred a gift at around \$400 or a raffle ticket for the more expensive gift. Next, students were asked if they had attended the Success Academy and their reasons for their choices. In debriefing, the facilitator answered students' questions.

Findings. Desirable items mentioned included: clothing, shoes (specifically and frequently mentioned were Nike and Jordan), iPod, TV, G3 phone, laptop, money, scholarship, jewelry, modeling classes at a modeling school, a record label contract, and opportunities to showcase dance or singing talents. By extension, opportunities to interact with professional sports teams would be highly desirable.

All students who attended all or most of the sessions said that it was worthwhile to attend. A couple of students volunteered that they could tell that attendance had helped them in the FCAT writing test.

Most of the students who attended the Academy said that they had done so because they wanted to learn and/or pass the FCAT. A couple of students added that the money earned would add to their college fund. Although the enrollment statistics suggest that the stipend to students had a substantial effect on the choice to participate, few students acknowledged money as an incentive.

One student “was forced to go” because he plays in the basketball team. No student mentioned parents as a determinant of attendance, but teenagers may not wish to acknowledge parental influence.

Students who discontinued attendance gave the following reasons: a) disappointment with the lack of teachers/teaching⁶, b) conflict with work or with extra-curricular activities that re-commenced after the winter break, c) having preferred to sleep, rest, spend time with family and friends, go to church, or not go out in the cold, d) being ill, and e) “did not feel like it.” Although ennui was more evident in their answers, the same reasons applied to students who never attended.

Among all students, especially those who never attended, there was substantial disbelief that students would get paid for attending school; particularly with the current financial situation. “It’s a scam.” “What school pays students to attend?” “There are too many students going and they won’t have the money to pay.” “Why would they spend the money this way when they could improve the school?” “It’s just a bribe, and they fool you, and won’t pay up.”

Associated with the disbelief, there was also concern over veiled conditions. Instead of students receiving the money, the money would be deposited in a bank account. They would have to wait for the money. Instead of money they would get a check, and “People were saying you will not get the money unless you pass the FCAT.” Moreover, “If you miss they deduct \$60 and in the end, we will have to pay the school.”

Some students appeared to reflect “older people’s” sentiment that students should not get paid for attending school. “You shouldn’t get paid for an education.” Finally, “Why do you need to go to school on Saturday that you can’t get Monday to Friday?”

Interpretations and Conclusions. To the extent that disbelief played a role in students’ decision not to attend, after students see peers paid for their current participation, attendance will increase substantially in subsequent academies that provide a stipend. Hence, if conducted again, schools should be ready to select specific students for inclusion, or enforce a strict first come, first serve policy, or be prepared to receive substantially more students than this year.

If indeed, the aim is to increase attendance the incentive schedule could be devised with the following characteristics: a) varied (a lower per diem and raffles); b) escalated to days of attendance (x days of attendance to participate in a raffle for the more coveted items); c) relatively more immediate (monthly raffle or possibility to withdraw accumulated funds). Students could also be given an additional or independent reward for substantial gains from the first to the second interim assessment. Goods need not be costly. Donations for goods and services could be requested from businesses and from sports teams and CD’s or DVD’s that showcase students’ talents might be produced by WLRN.

⁶Because an unexpectedly high number of students attended the first day of the Academy, hundreds of students could not be accommodated with teachers on the first day and/or were “just given packets to do.” Additional teachers were subsequently recruited.

SUGGESTIONS BY SCHOOLS' ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

During the last day of the Academy and on the subsequent Monday, the evaluator interviewed principals, assistant principals, and other relevant staff identified by the administrators on features that they would like to see in any future implementations of the Success Academy⁷. Some of the features were in place this year and others are new.

All respondents made suggestions that can be summarized under the following five points.

- 1) The Success Academy should be guided by a comprehensive plan disseminated in advance with enough time to permit adequate preparation.
- 2) Policies and procedures should be consistent.
- 3) Sessions should start before the December holiday break.
- 4) School personnel should have input into the development of the curriculum and/or the curriculum should allow some flexibility so that personnel can tailor the curriculum to schools' specific needs.
- 5) Schools welcome support from the regions and from the district.

Interview Methods

The interviews were unstructured. They were initiated with a paraphrase of, "Tell me about the things that you would like to see in the Success Academy if it is implemented again next year." The evaluator noted responses and prompted respondents if any of the following areas were not commented upon: staffing, students, curriculum, schedule, and student payments. The evaluator sought clarifications, expansions, and examples as necessary.

Specifics of each suggestion, many of which varied across respondents, appear below. The section that follows also addresses additional issues raised.

DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND DISSEMINATE IT WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE SESSIONS

In light of the large number of students who might participate in future Academies,⁸ and of the importance of recruiting highly qualified teachers, all respondents emphasized the need for preparation. Specific suggestions with regard to preparation and program features are listed below.

- Recruit an applicant pool of highly qualified and experienced teachers⁹.
 - Advertise widely.
 - Advertise with enough time so that teachers can make holiday plans in consideration of their commitment.

⁷ N = 13

⁸ Some schools had turnouts much larger than expected. Also, focus groups with participants and non-participants indicated that some students did not participate because they did not believe that they would get paid (See "Results of Focus Groups" under Tables). To the extent that this is accurate, paying students this year will increase turnout on subsequent years.

⁹ One school administrator felt unable to dismiss a teacher who was consistently late because the teacher could not be readily replaced.

-
- Request nominations of highly qualified teachers from other principals who do not have Saturday tutoring and/or from regional and district content area supervisory staff.
 - Minimize or eliminate sessions during the holidays in order to attract a wide pool of applicants.
 - Use marketing strategies such as “elite only” in order to attract teachers.
 - Develop policies to enhance teacher retention.
 - Ask teachers to sign a contract for 90% or more of the total number of days planned..
 - Include a bonus or some other form of incentive for perfect attendance.
 - Determine enrollment caps and if necessary, specify target group for enrollment.
 - Determine the needs for technical support, clerical, custodial, and security personnel and recruit these with enough time for schools to be fully staffed¹⁰.
 - Announce the program to students well in advance of when families might make vacation plans.
 - Provide pre-session training for teachers on the curriculum, procedures, pacing of instruction with modeling and/or videotapes.
 - Provide pre-session training for clerical staff on record-keeping.
 - Provide written information to all parties (staff, students, families) on policies, rules, and procedures that are clear, concise, and consistent.
 - Detail expectations and consequences of attendance and of non-attendance.
 - Detail procedures for enrollment in the Credit Union.
 - Pre-register students with a contract and close registration before the beginning of the Academy (from 1 month to 1 week prior to the start of sessions).
 - Have registered students sign up with the Credit Union before sessions begin or on their own at the Credit Union.
 - Establish procedures for keeping records of attendance.
 - Have clerical staff enter attendance instead of individual teachers (reduces irregularities and circumvents the problem that substitutes cannot enter attendance).
 - Have student sign-in logs for the beginning and end of the day.
 - Include a bag lunch for students.
 - To reduce the possibility of burnout, plan to rotate school administrative duties among the principal and assistant principals.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SHOULD BE CONSISTENT

All respondents stressed the importance of consistency, of following through “as promised.” Students’ trust is violated when rules are changed, and changes place undue burden on staff. An example provided was that if students were told that they could see their balance on line, they

¹⁰ One school needed as many as 6 security personnel.

should be able to do so. Also, it was considered important that the information be consistent across the schools and the Credit Union.

SESSIONS SHOULD START BEFORE THE HOLIDAY BREAK

All respondents agreed that sessions should start before the December holiday break, but respondents varied substantially on the desirable start-up date. Starting sessions in October was acceptable to all respondents. In addition, whereas a couple of respondents thought sessions during the December holiday were beneficial, most thought it would be best to decrease or eliminate these. The evaluator suggests that a reduction of sessions during the holidays is likely to increase the pool of teacher applicants. A large pool of applicants will allow principals the chance to be selective.

HAVE A FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM

Respondents would like options built in to the curriculum so that schools and/or teachers can allocate instructional time to benchmarks according to their students' needs. Several other justifications were offered¹¹. Additional suggestions included below.

- Devise the curriculum with school and or state input.
- The curriculum should include differentiation for students at various levels and/or training for teachers on how to differentiate the same curriculum by level.
- Provide the curriculum ahead of time so that teachers can prepare.
- Have the curriculum online so that it can be used with smart boards.
- Offer SAT training for students who passed the FCAT.

SCHOOLS WELCOME REGIONAL AND DISTRICT SUPPORT

Numerous suggestions fell into the category of support. They included the following.

- Continue to provide copies of materials to be used. Those were very helpful!
- Continue to brief and de-brief with teachers.
- Provide other materials needed (pencils, timers, calculators, laboratory materials) or list of needs (beans for elementary school students) well in advance of need.
- Have the Credit Union on site before and after, not during instructional time.
- Visitors are welcome.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

Two additional issues surfaced in interviews. One was the need for a route manager to re-assess transportation needs after the Academy has started. Administrators at one school mentioned that

¹¹ Tenth graders who are not enrolled in a creative writing course need more writing practice than those who are enrolled and all tenth graders should practice writing short and extended responses. Some of the material, because they were released items, had already been used by some students.

they had almost three times as many buses as they needed. Other schools may have had similar experiences.

The second issue of whether or not to penalize students for non-attendance was a topic of concern among the administrators interviewed. Most administrators suggested that in future academies the payment schedule not include a penalty. The arguments for payments without penalty were as follows. One, students too far in the red might not return. Two, penalties do not mirror adult life because these are not extracted from workers' earned pay. Three, some situations should not be penalized, and by excluding these, schools undertake the additional task of having to verify students' excuses¹².

But, Did They Learn?

Teachers and administrators agreed that even students primarily motivated by the payments, gained from attendance. Indeed, at one school, a runaway who had been absent from Monday to Friday classes did not waiver in attendance of the Saturday Academy.

SUGGESTIONS BY OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

The evaluator also gathered input from district supervisory/administrative staff from Curriculum, World Languages, and ESE on suggestions for future academies¹³. In these interviews and focus groups, the suggestion that teachers be trained ahead of time (elementary and senior high school teachers separately) emerged again, as did the suggestion that the Academy begin earlier in the year. Additional suggestions included the following.

Staffing

- Refinement of the supervisory role. For supervisors who observed to provide feedback, modeled, co-taught, and substituted for absent teachers, it was logistically difficult to carry out all roles and in some cases to prioritize need.
- Offer teachers the bonus, on a volunteer basis, of being videotaped during instruction. This would aid professional development and would also attract teachers interested in pursuing national certification.
- Have ESOL certified teachers who also have command of the most prevalent home languages provide reading and mathematics instruction to ELL students.
- Have teachers certified in SPED provide the instruction for SPED students and keep the student teacher ratio appropriately low.
- Provide teachers with training and access to the technology available in the classroom to which they are assigned (Smartboard, computers, overheads).

¹² The report on the focus group conducted with students includes a list of incentives that students said were highly desirable. These might be considered in future academies.

¹³ N = 24

Scheduling/Grouping

- Allow 3 hour sessions for all science classes so that sessions can balance the inclusion of items from the item bank, demonstrations, hands-on laboratory work, and computer based instruction (Gizmo).
- Group students in ESE and ELL respectively. For ELL, students in levels 1 to 3 can be grouped together and assignment of students in level 4 can be made on an individual basis.

Special Needs of Non-Traditional Learners

- For ELL, ESE students, and students in alternative education, provide teachers with advance information on student’s individual strengths and needs.
- Have curriculum available in advance to integrate adaptations for ELL and accommodations for SPED students in the lesson.
- Students in ESE might benefit from additional or alternate daily reinforcers because money that is provided weeks after attendance might not be adequate motivators.

General Conduct

- Include in the student contract a stipulation that active participation is expected and non-participation or disrespect is reason for immediate dismissal.
- Do not allow late arrivals.

EVALUATOR’S CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Academy showcased the best that the district has to offer and also the challenges it faces. When it was determined that additional structures and supports were necessary, district, regional, and school staff mobilized very quickly, very effectively, and en masse. By the same token, the needs of students and the needs for professional development of teachers are substantial.

Educators’ commitment was impressive. In spite of extended work weeks respondents across the board were very strongly in favor of future implementations if results are favorable.

If the Academy is implemented again, the lessons learned will serve well. The two biggest challenges future implementations will face are the recruitment of a sufficient number of highly qualified teachers with proven track records and the curriculum to be used. Schools have numerous extra copies of the materials used this year and teachers will likely use them in spite of the fact that the instructional packets do not belong in the Monday to Friday curriculum. Also, students who attended in 2009 and attend again in 2010 will likely see some repetition. These issues are problems because there is a limited number of FCAT released items and because a substantial investment in time was made by the curriculum developers that would be difficult to reproduce in light of all their other responsibilities.

The evaluator adds the following suggestions to those presented above.

- Because exemplary instruction is necessary for significant gains in reading, future academies should assign students to exemplary teachers.
- Because the staff is very dedicated and under a lot of pressure to perform, it is important that the Academy be structured in a way that minimizes the possibility of staff burnout. Administrative staff might be rotated and curriculum support staff should also rotate or have a weekday off to compensate for Saturdays worked.
- Being that the quality of instruction is the most important ingredient to success, a broad applicant pool is essential so that principals may select the teachers that they feel are most highly qualified. Recruitment should extend to recently retired teachers, teachers in charter schools, and teachers recently withdrawn from the teaching district workforce who might still hold certification. Also, students' attendance would likely not diminish if students are offered a slightly lower rate for attendance than they were offered this year as well as raffles for coveted items¹⁴. Savings could be used to increase the pool of applicants by providing a bonus or a raffled incentive to teachers.
- Professional development should stress that the focus of lessons should be on the subject matter to be tested; the FCAT does not test strategies. Students learn to use strategies by using them, not by hearing about them. Videotapes of best practices might help teachers implement the principles they learn.

Finally, the evaluator is very appreciative to the administrative staff for making her feel welcomed, to the teachers for allowing her to visit their classrooms, and to the many individuals who so generously shared their ideas. They remain anonymous because they were promised confidentiality.

¹⁴ To the extent that the results of focus groups with students are valid, once credibility is established by paying students for attendance, very large student turnouts might be expected in future implementations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There are three sources of recommendations for future implementations: 1) principals/ APs, 2) district supervisor/administrative staff, and 3) the evaluator. At the closing of the Academy, principals and AP's ($n = 13$) provided suggestions in individual interviews and later confirmed and expanded the following list of recommendations in a group meeting.

1. A financial reward for students is essential for high attendance rates. Absences due to academic activities should not be penalized.
2. Well in advance, develop and disseminate a comprehensive, detailed plan that includes,
 - teacher and student contracts,
 - student pre-registration for the Academy and for the Credit Union,
 - enrollment caps and/or target groups,
 - procedures for keeping attendance,
 - start-up in October and no sessions during the winter break,
 - curriculum with differentiated instruction developed with input from school personnel
3. Provide district/regional support with
 - recruiting experienced teachers with proven records,
 - teacher training (pre-Academy and pre-session) and debriefing of curriculum,
 - curriculum and materials,
 - online curriculum,
 - student bag lunches,
 - maintain consistent policies and practices,
 - re-assess transportation needs
4. Decrease burn-out by rotating school administrative duties among the principal and assistant principals.

Recommendations by district supervisory/administrative staff ($n = 24$) included the following.

5. Prioritize the need for supervisory staff to serve as substitute teachers or as coaches (staff cannot do both simultaneously).
6. Offer teachers the bonus of being videotaped during instruction (for national certification).
7. Have SPED certified teachers and ESOL certified teachers with home language skills.
8. Include accommodations in the curriculum for ELL and SPED students.

9. Dismiss students who do not participate actively.

Evaluator's recommendations.

10. To ensure experienced teachers, recruit widely (teachers from other districts, retired teachers), and include incentives.
11. Use videotaped demonstrations of best practices in preparing teachers for the curriculum.
12. Limit staff to teachers who might be considered to be exemplary in their use of best practices.
13. Because incentives identified by adults may not prove rewarding to students, if students will not be remunerated for attendance, use incentives in an incentive structure derived from students' reports of what they consider desirable.

TABLES

Percentage Attendance by School and Date

Date	Elementary			Senior High Schools					Corporate Academy South
	Holmes	Liberty City	Homestead	Miami Carol City	Miami Central	Miami Edison	Miami Norland	North Miami	
n =	160	97	523	403	643	405	356	849	40
Dec.20	64%	77%	29%	62%	79%	63%	75%	98%	83%
Dec.22	61%	73%	41%	70%	72%	60%	72%	94%	83%
Dec.23	57%	78%	41%	46%	66%	64%	76%	94%	80%
Dec.29	71%	71%	43%	56%	70%	76%	74%	88%	70%
Dec.30	65%	83%	42%	61%	71%	66%	73%	88%	80%
Jan.10	73%	80%	67%	53%	64%	75%	79%	82%	83%
Jan.17	59%	69%	46%	64%	59%	62%	69%	78%	78%
Jan.24	64%	70%	69%	68%	65%	52%	76%	77%	78%
Jan.31	59%	69%	70%	61%	64%	60%	77%	78%	80%
Feb.7	56%	71%	65%	61%	60%	57%	76%	62%	88%
Feb.14	51%	67%	59%	63%	61%	59%	73%	74%	78%
Feb.21	56%	62%	63%	68%	64%	57%	77%	72%	83%
Feb.28	51%	62%	58%	69%	63%	57%	73%	74%	83%
Mar.7	59%	69%	58%	72%	66%	55%	74%	73%	85%

Note. Each school's date with the highest percent attendance is highlighted.

Frequency Distribution of Total Attendance by School

Days n =	Elementary			Senior High Schools					Corporate Academy South 40
	Holmes 160	Liberty City 97	Homestead 523	Miami Carol City 403	Miami Central 643	Miami Edison 405	Miami Norland 356	North Miami 849	
1	8%	1%	9%	6%	5%	7%	6%	2%	3%
2	4%	4%	6%	7%	5%	6%	3%	2%	3%
3	4%	2%	4%	5%	4%	5%	2%	3%	8%
4	9%	4%	7%	4%	6%	5%	2%	3%	
5	6%	7%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%
6	8%	1%	9%	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%
7	3%	4%	9%	4%	4%	6%	3%	2%	
8	4%	6%	8%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%
9	8%	5%	8%	7%	5%	6%	5%	2%	3%
10	4%	7%	5%	8%	7%	7%	6%	3%	
11	7%	18%	6%	12%	9%	8%	8%	5%	3%
12	6%	3%	10%	15%	13%	12%	13%	11%	5%
13	15%	19%	9%	16%	16%	14%	16%	21%	18%
14	14%	19%	4%	3%	13%	10%	28%	38%	50%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
High Attendance (11 to 14 days)	43%	58%	29%	46%	51%	44%	64%	75%	75%

Percentage Participation by School and by Student Characteristic

Student Characteristic		Elementary			Senior High Schools					Corporate Academy South
		Holmes	Liberty City	Homestead	Miami Carol City	Miami Central	Miami Edison	Miami Norland	North Miami	
n =		160	97	523	403	643	405	356	849	40
Grade	3	66%	85%							
	4	63%	71%							
	5	57%	86%							
	6		79%							
	9			30%	24%	39%	37%	27%	34%	----
	10			31%	25%	43%	43%	31%	31%	48%
	11			24%	20%	38%	42%	18%	28%	52%
	12			7%	3%	12%	19%	----	25%	33%
GENDER	Female	39%	50%	27%	18%	36%	38%	20%	31%	43%
	Male	38%	37%	22%	17%	32%	34%	18%	28%	39%
ETHNICITY	Black	38%	45%	29%	19%	36%	37%	20%	32%	55%
	Hispanic	----	----	21%	9%	27%	22%	13%	19%	33%
	White			20%		10%		18%	24%	13%
Free/Reduced Lunch Participants										
	no	9%	36%	20%	14%	32%	27%	17%	24%	32%
	yes	39%	44%	26%	19%	35%	39%	21%	34%	49%
English Language Learner										
		----		35%	25%	42%	54%	28%	51%	
2008 Reading	1	56%	81%	29%	25%	39%	43%	25%	36%	64%
	2	64%	100%	31%	23%	51%	46%	28%	29%	33%
	3	55%	76%	37%	24%	47%	42%	26%	28%	----
	4	----	----	34%	44%	70%	----	----	24%	
	5			----	----	----	----	----	----	
2008 Mathematics	1	51%	84%	28%	20%	38%	37%	24%	34%	73%
	2	46%	75%	30%	25%	43%	46%	28%	36%	52%
	3	71%	96%	34%	27%	51%	49%	28%	28%	----
	4	57%	----	37%	27%	55%	54%	21%	28%	----
	5	----		----	----	73%	----	----	----	

Note. Percentage of each group that attended 1 or more days.
 ---- Percentages were not generated for cells with fewer than 10 observations.

Descriptive Statistics on the Teachers in the Academy

		Total number of teachers	Taught at least 7 of 14 days	Taught at least 8 of last 9 days	Daily		
					Average number of teachers	Minimum number of teachers	Maximum number of teachers
2501	Holmes Elementary	24	54%	42%	14	10	16
2981	Liberty City Elementary	17	65%	35%	10	9	10
7151	Homestead Senior	72	46%	33%	33	25	42
7231	Miami Carol City	51	69%	43%	34	25	37
7251	Miami Central	69	51%	38%	37	25	42
7301	Miami Edison	58	67%	55%	36	19	42
7381	Miami Norland	79	49%	30%	41	38	45
7591	North Miami	116	51%	43%	61	23	74
8201	Corporate Academy	7	57%	29%	4	2	5
Total		493	54%	40%	--	--	--

Gains in FCAT Developmental Points of Participants and Non-Participants

Grade	Participants			Non-Participants		
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.
Reading						
4	50	295	224	31	297	198
5	47	95	172	23	66	122
9	622	61	156	1,239	58	152
10	847	43	189	1,486	18	184
Mathematics						
4	71	177	198	36	207	204
5	55	226	152	25	224	230
9	737	100	111	1,245	88	126
10	972	78	119	1,464	60	134

Mathematics Gains in FCAT Developmental Points of Matched Groups

Grade	Participants			Non-Participants		
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.
9	607	102	97	617	90	94
10	806	79	92	771	66	106
Both grades	1413	89	95	1388	77	101

Reading Gains in FCAT Developmental Points of Matched Groups

Grade	Participants						Non-Participants		
	Students of Exemplary Teachers			Students of Other Teachers			n	Mean	S.D.
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.			
9	112	80	122	108	18	167	108	58	130
10	162	46	180	156	42	215	148	12	158
Both grades	274	60	157	264	32	197	256	31	148

Numbers of participants differ across samples because students were included if matches were available

ENDNOTE: STATISTICAL ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Sample. Students who attended for at least five days were included in analyses. For analyses of students of exemplary teachers, inclusion also required a minimum of 5 days with those teachers (teacher attendance from schools' records, cross-checked with payroll records was crossed with student attendance from the electronic grade book). Because outliers can skew results, students with IQ below 75 or with 2008 FCAT scores of 100 were not included in analyses.

Analyses. R, a computer software program with a routine designed to match cases, was used to match participants on: enrolled school; 2008 achievement; gender; race; free-reduced lunch program participation; English Language Learner status (ELL); Haitian/non-Haitian country of birth; Special Education Placement; number of outdoor suspensions and days of school absences. T-tests and chi-square tests were conducted to test the comparability of the samples. Results of these tests indicated significant differences between participants and non-participants on some of the samples. These differences were addressed by identifying and deleting outliers through review of DfBeta and of leverage values and by including the variables on which the samples differed (ELL status, suspensions, or absences) as covariates in the regression analyses. Also, students with 50 or more days of absences were deleted. These were all from the comparison groups. Absences and suspensions, both of which had highly skewed distributions, were standardized by grade and transformed ($100 - \log_{10}$). Independent variables were centered.

FCAT 2009 developmental scores were regressed on participation (0,1), and on variables with significant differences between the groups: 2008 developmental scores, grade9 (0,1), ELL status (0,1), absences, suspensions, and the interactions between participation and covariates. Interactions terms were tested, found not to be significant and removed from the model. Non-significant covariates from a second set of regressions were removed from the final regression equations. All regressions were checked for collinearity ($VIF < 10$). Analyses for grades other than 9th and 10th were not conducted because the number of students matched in these grades was low: 3rd grade = 4, 4th grade = 31, 5th grade = 26, 6th grade = 4, and 11th grade = 5.

Results: 9th and 10th grade. For participant and non-participant comparison students, the final regression of 2009 mathematics scores on participation and covariates (2008 scores, grade, LEP, suspensions, and absences) was significant ($F = 803.964$, $df = 6,2800$, $p < .0001$). Participation, with a Beta = 10.43, was significant ($t = 3.21$, $p = .001$). Cohen's d effect size for the difference of adjusted means = .25.

For students of exemplary reading teachers and non-participant comparison students, the final regression of 2009 scores on participation and covariates (2008 scores, grade, and LEP) was significant ($F = 252.43$, $df = 4,529$, $p < .0001$). Participation, with a Beta = 26.05, was significant ($t = 2.04$, $p = .04$). Cohen's d effect size for the difference between adjusted means = .12.

For students of exemplary reading teachers and students of other teachers, the final regression of 2009 scores on teacher assignment and covariates (2008 scores, and absences) was significant ($F = 231.22$, $df = 3,528$, $p < .0001$). Teacher assignment, with a Beta = 33.00, was significant ($t = 2.21$, $p = .028$). Cohen's d effect size for the difference between adjusted means = .32.